

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

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ACDA-10 EB-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-03 USIA-04 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8831

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 9079

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, UR, VS, IS, EG

SUBJECT: CALL ON DEPARTING SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV

1. SUMMARY. DURING MARCH 28 COURTESY CALL OUTGOING SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO RETURNING TO MOSCOW (PARIS 8856); OUTLINED WHAT HE SAW AS BASIC ASPECTS OF POMPIDOU' S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES -- WHICH HE EXPECTS TO CONTINUE LARGELY UN-CHANGED; STRESSED KEY RESPONSIBILITY OF US AND SOVIETS FOR ENSURING PEACE; REITERATED FAMILIAR SOVIET POSITIONS ON MIDDLE CONFIDENTIAL

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EAST; AND, WHILE PLEASED WITH PROGRESS IN VIETNAM, THOUGHT US SHOULD PRESS SAIGON TO REMOVE ALLEGED OBSTACLES TO WORK OF

ICCS. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR LENGTHY AND VERY CORDIAL CONVERSATION. END SUMMARY.

2. RETURN TO MOSCOW. AT OUTSET OF MARKEDLY FRIENDLY ONE AND ONE- QUARTER HOUR COURTESY CALL ON SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV MARCH 28, HE SAID HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO RETURN TO MOSCOW AFTER 16 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN PEKING, WARSAW, EAST BERLIN, AND PARIS. ABRASIMOV SPOKE WARMLY OF HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS OVER THE YEARS, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED AMBASSADORS BEAM, RUSH, AND WATSON, AND SAID HE EXPECTED TO VISIT WASHINGTON IN CONNECTION WITH HIS NEW DUTIES -- AT WHICH TIME HE HOPED TO TALK WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY RUSH. ABRASIMOV APPEARED VERY SELF- ASSURED AND ANXIOUS TO RETURN HOME FROM FRANCE , WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS " INTERESTING BUT DIFFICULT COUNTRY."

3. SOVIET VIEW OF FRANCE. ABRASIMOV VOLUNTEERED FOLLOWING SKETCH OF FRENCH POLICIES UNDER POMPIDOU. HE RECALLED POMPIDOU' S REMARKS DURING EARLY 1970 VISIT TO US THAT FRANCE WOULD REMAIN MEMBER OF ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, BUT NOTED POMPIDOU ALSO MADE CLEAR GOF WOULD CONTINUE " COOPERATION" WITH USSR. DESPITE RESULTS OF RECENT LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, WHICH HE NOTED HAD ITS DIFFICULT MOMENTS, AND IMMINENCE OF " A FEW CHANGES" IN MAKE- UP OF NEW MESSMER GOVERNMENT, ABRASIMOV THOUGHT FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY WOULD REMAIN ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED. HE THOUGHT BETTENCOURT, GUICHARD, OR PEYREFITTE WOULD BE THE NEXT FOM MIN, BUT STRESSED " POMPIDOU, NOT QUAI D' ORSAY, MAKES POLICY." ON INTERNAL SIDE, HE TOOK MARXIST VIEW, POINTING TO SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS -- LIKE INFLATION -- AND FORESAW NEED FOR ACTION BY NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO COPE WITH RESULTANT " SOCIAL PROBLEMS." IN RESPONSE TO HIS QUESTION ON PRESENT STATUS OF FRENCH- US RELATIONS ACROSS BACKDROP OF WESTERN MONETARY AND TRADE DIFFICULTIES, I TERMED OUR BILATERAL TIES " GOOD," NOTED WE AND FRENCH SEEK SIMILAR LONG- RANGE GOALS OF STABLE MONETARY AND TRADE SYSTEM, BUT RECOGNIZED THERE WOULD BE DIFFERENCES AT TIMES BETWEEN US. I CONJECTURED IT ALSO IN SOVIET INTEREST THAT STABILITY RETURN TO NON- COMMUNIST STATES' MONETARY SYSTEM -- TO WHICH ABRASIMOV NODDED ASSENT.

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4. US- SOVIET RAPPROCHEMENT. IN LIGHT OF HIS IMPENDING DEPARTURE FROM FRANCE, ABRASIMOV SAID HE PRESENTLY " MORE INTERESTED IN US- SOVIET RELATIONS." NOTING " SUPERPOWER" LABEL OFTEN ATTRIBUTED TO US AND USSR, ABRASIMOV REASONED THAT IN ANY CASE BECAUSE WE ARE " GREAT POWERS" WE HAVE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STRENGTHENING PEACE. I AGREED THAT US- SOVIET TIES UNIQUELY IMPORTANT IN KEEPING WORLD PEACE AND THUS PERHAPS IN SOME WAYS QUALITATIVELY DIFFERENT FROM US TIES WITH ALLIES. FOR THIS REASON, I

WELCOMED PROGRESS IN RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT TO MOSCOW AND SAID USG LOOKS FORWARD TO SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO WASHINGTON BY CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV IN COMING MONTHS.

5. MIDDLE EAST. TURNING TO MIDDLE EAST, ABRASIMOV EMPHASIZED TIME ON SIDE OF MORE NUMEROUS AND INCREASINGLY EDUCATED ARABS, EXPRESSED "SURPRISE" AT ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE, AND THOUGHT POLITICAL SOLUTION THE ONLY WAY OUT OF IMPASSE. I AGREED POLITICAL SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES IS WHAT IS NEEDED, NOTING CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR UN RES 242, BUT STRESSED ARABS AND ISRAELIS MUST THEMSELVES REACH SOLUTION IN ORDER FOR IT TO BE LASTING. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I WONDERED WHETHER A REDUCTION IN SUPPLY OF ARMS TO OUR RESPECTED ISRAELI AND ARAB FRIENDS MIGHT REDUCE TENSIONS. ABRASIMOV ARGUED SOVIETS TRIES TO FURNISH ONLY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS IN ORDER TO DENY ARABS POSSIBILITY OF LAUNCHING ATTACKS. I NOTED OUR ARMS WERE ALSO FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES BUT REPEATED PERSONAL VIEW THAT REAL EFFORT TO STOP ARMS FLOW TO MIDDLE EAST MIGHT HELP SUBSTANTIALLY.

6. VIETNAM. UNLIKE PREVIOUS ABRASIMOV ENCOUNTERS WITH EMBASSY, THIS MEETING PROVOKED HARDLY ANY ATTENTION TO VIETNAM CONFLICT -- WHICH HE CONSIDERED "NEARLY, BUT NOT QUITE, OVER." ABRASIMOV PLEASED THAT LAST US TROOPS LEAVE VIETNAM THIS WEEK BUT WORRIED OVER ARMED CLASHES CONTINUING IN SVN AND WONDERED WHETHER US MIGHT INTERCEDE WITH SAIGON TO HELP STOP THEM. I EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ICCS HAD NOT YET COALESCED INTO AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT TO STABILIZE VIETNAM SITUATION. PRESUMABLY SOVIETS SHOULD ALSO FIND IT IN THEIR INTEREST TO MAKE ICCS WORK AND MIGHT THEREFORE ENCOURAGE THEIR
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FRIENDS ON ICCS TO MAKE GENUINE EFFORT TOWARD STABILITY. ABRASIMOV SAID HE HAD SEEN AMBASSADORS OF CANADA, INDONESIA, HUNGARY, AND POLAND IN PARIS AND WAS TOLD SAIGON OFTEN PREVENTED THEIR ICCS REPS FROM CARRYING OUT RESPONSIBILITIES. I QUESTIONED WHETHER SAIGON COULD PREVENT ACTION BY THE ICCS IF FOUR POWERS WERE DETERMINED TO INVESTIGATE OBJECTIVELY COMPLAINTS RAISED BY EITHER VIETNAMESE SIDE, REITERATING PERSONAL VIEW THAT GREATER EFFORTS BY USSR AS WELL AS US WITH ICCS MEMBERS MIGHT HELP BRING THEM OUT OF IMPASSE, THAT STABILITY IN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS IN OVERRIDING INTEREST OF ALL CONCERNED.

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To: STATE INFO BELGRADE
BERLIN
BONN
BUCHAREST
BUDAPEST
LONDON
MOSCOW

NATO
PRAGUE
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